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ILLUSTRATED

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BASEBALL BEATS t.u.  
SPRING CAMP  
SWEET 16  
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MARCH/APRIL ISSUE



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*BY ROB HAVENS '88*

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*BY ROB HAVENS '88*

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**On the Cover:** Nick Starkel and Kellen Mond battle for QB1. Photo by Rob Havens '88



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# Howdy Ags!

Is it football season yet? This may be a long summer as we all anticipate the next season of Aggie football. I was super excited when I found out Jimbo Fisher would be taking over as our new head coach. Now, after seeing him in action along with his new staff I can't wait to see us in the fall.

Spring practices have been a lot of fun to cover even if we only get to watch the first thirty minutes. Please enjoy reading my story inside covering all of the changes the new staff has made.

Both of our basketball teams wrapped up their seasons with Sweet 16 appearances. Inside we reminisce on the seasons they had and the excitement they brought us in the NCAA tournament.

Congratulations to our women's swimming team and our men's tennis team for once again being named SEC Champs! And good luck to our current spring sports that will be going after their own SEC titles.

I've been enjoying my time covering Aggie Baseball as the team recovered from a tough beginning to their conference play but have now righted the ship and have their sites set on Omaha. Beating the hell outta t.u. was fun to watch too!

Congratulations to our softball team that is getting ready to move into their new facility. I can't wait to watch you ladies play there in the final regular season series of the year!

What a blessing it is that we have such strong programs across the board. It makes my job so much fun to cover Aggie sports!

Thanks & Gig'em Ags!

*Rob '88*



For real-time updates on all things Aggie sports, be sure to follow us on Instagram (@aggielandillustrated) and Twitter (@aggiemag).



# Aggieland ILLUSTRATED

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## you're out...

Junior catcher Cole Bedford blocks the plate and tags a sliding Long Beach State runner in a non-conference game. Bedford has been an anchor for the team this season. He has been solid behind the plate and has had a lot of big hits for the Ags as well. His ability to help the entire pitching staff be successful has been a priceless commodity for Coach Childress. Photo by Rob Havens '88.









snapshot







### **mano-a-mano...**

Junior defensive back Charles Oliver and Sophomore Klyde Chriss get after each other in a one-on-one drill during spring football. Coach Fisher has continued to stress the importance of being physical and this drill brought out the best in both athletes. Watching the matchups between offensive and defensive players on this day was quite a sight to see as players and coaches got to witness teammates compete to see who was the toughest!

Photo by Rob Havens '88.





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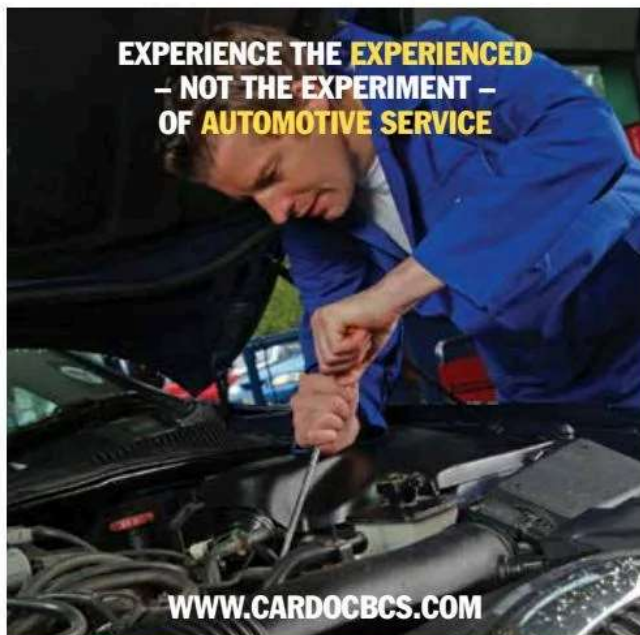
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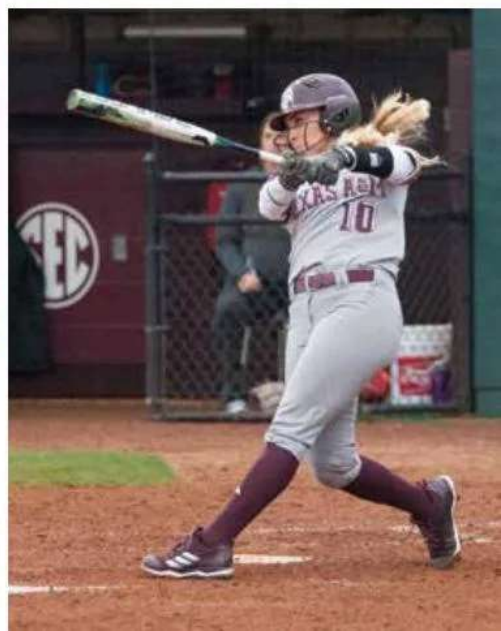
**[baseball]** The Ags jumped out to a big start this season going 16-1 during non-conference. But unfortunately, they stumbled during the first part of conference play and lost three series while tallying a 3-6 record. A change in the batting lineup and the starting pitching rotation was just what the doctor ordered. The team won six games in a row with a big victory over tu and two conference series wins over LSU and Alabama to right the ship. The team is back on track with Omaha on their mind.

**[men's golf]** The golf team has had an amazing year so far, winning a program-best five tournaments. This is a special group that has the ability to bring another team national championship to Texas A&M. In it's most recent tournament here in Aggieland, Chandler Phillips and Walker Lee claimed the individual tournament championship.

**[men's swimming]** The men's season was highlighted by a huge win over No. 5 Texas for the first time in 55 years. The team went on to a runner-up finish in the SEC Championships giving the team its best finish since joining the conference. The Ags took 14 to the NCAA's and finished in 14<sup>th</sup> place.

**[softball]** Texas A&M is currently ranked #9 in the country and continuing to post big wins in the toughest softball conference in the country. They wrapped up their final series in the old stadium and are looking forward to competing in the Brand New Davis Diamond for the final regular-season series of the year. The team is excited about the new stadium but they won't let that take their focus off of competing for some post-season championships.

**[women's tennis]** The team has faced a gauntlet of nationally ranked teams this year. They have continued to battle and put together winning streaks of seven matches and five matches during the season. They hope to get another streak going as they enter post-season play. Coach Weaver also signed the #1 class in the nation in 2018.





## scoreboard



**[women's golf]** Texas A&M women's golf team has won two tournaments already this spring and looks forward to making waves in the SEC and NCAA tournaments. Maddie Szeryk won her second consecutive tournament and was named the SEC Golfer of the Week. The team has been in contention in almost every tournament they have competed in this year and hopes to put it all together for a championship run.

**[women's swimming]** The team won its third straight SEC Championship dominating the field and leading from wire-to-wire. They beat second-place Georgia by almost 300 points and had the largest group of qualified competitors in program history to make it to the NCAA Championships. The team did not disappoint as they earned a program-best third-place finish at Nationals for the second straight year.

**[track & field]** The Aggies got to host the Indoor SEC Championships and the NCAA Championships this spring. The men finished with a fourth-place finish while the women took fifth in the SEC meet. In the National meet, the Aggie men took fifth place and the women finished tenth. The outdoor season has begun and both teams took wins in San Antonio and Houston.



**[men's tennis]** The #5 nationally ranked Aggies won their second straight SEC Championship when they defeated #7 Mississippi St in a 5-2 match. The Ags clinched the championship with an 11-0 conference record. This team has been something special all year and have their eyes set on a national championship!





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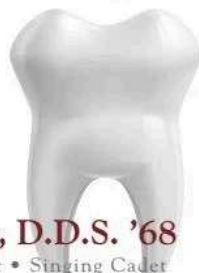


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# SWEET S

TRIPS FOR BOTH BASKET



The March Madness took a whole new meaning in Aggieland as both our men's and women's programs made it to the final 16 teams standing in their respective tournaments. Not an easy feat and very rare for a single school's programs to both make it that far in the same year.

For the men, it was a rollercoaster season. Billy Kennedy had assembled what was arguably the most talented and deepest teams in Texas A&M history. The team had great success early on and vaulted to the top of the polls to the #5 spot.

Unfortunately, the season was clouded with injuries and suspensions, which derailed the team and after an 11-1 start they went on a five game skid to began conference play. From there the Aggies tried to battle their way back into NCAA Tournament contention. With a week left in the regular season, a post season birth

was doubtful but the Aggies won their last three games and showed signs that the team that had been so successful at the beginning of the year was still alive.

The Aggies lost a one point decision to Alabama in the SEC Tournament but due to their strong non conference schedule earned a seven seed in the Big Dance. They were matched up against ten seed Providence in the Charlotte Regional.

Tyler Davis and Robert Williams had big time games in the first round. Davis scored 14 points and captured 15 rebounds while Williams also had a double-double scoring 13 and adding 14 rebounds of his own. It was a hard fought game but the Aggies outlasted the Friars 73-69.

The win earned the Aggies a date with North Carolina in their own backyard. In what has got to be one of the greatest win's in program history the Aggies

dominated the Tar Heels in front of a sea of Carolina Blue fans.

T.J. Starks scored 21 points and the Aggies dominated in the paint to shock the program that has five national championships. The Ags out rebounded UNC 50-36 while holding the Heels to only 6 of 31 from behind the three point line. The Ags had four players score in double figures: Starks, Davis, Hogg and Gilder. The win propelled the team to the Sweet 16 in Los Angeles.

The Aggies took on a red hot Michigan team that would wind up advancing to the national championship game. They shot 62 percent from the floor against the Ags including 14 three pointers. The Aggies ended their season with a 99-72 loss to a team that had one of their best shooting performances of the season.

For our women's program, the expectations are always high. The



# SIXTEEN

BASKETBALL PROGRAMS / BY ROB HAVENS '88



addition of freshman Chennedy Carter, a McDonald's All American player, gave Gary Blair a difference maker on the court that could elevate the program to the next level.

The Ags jumped out to a 10-2 record to begin the season and had a nail biting loss to defending national champion South Carolina on New Year's Eve. They would continue to get better as the season progressed and finished 11-5 in conference play.

Led by the stellar play of team MVP Anriel Howard the Aggies went 2-1 in the SEC Tournament and earned a four seed in the NCAA Tournament. The Aggies got to host the first two rounds and faced a spirited team in #13 Drake to begin the tourney.

Carter scored 26 points and added 11 assist in her first career NCAA Tournament game. Senior Khaalia

Hillsman scored 22 points and Junior Danni Williams added 18 to the Aggies final tally as the team won 89-76.

The victory set up one of the most exciting victories in Aggie Women's Basketball history against DePaul. Down by 17 points in the third quarter the team refused to quit. Carter took over the game and scored 37 points to ignite the comeback. Anriel Howard had an unbelievable game and willed the team to win scoring 18 points and collecting 19 rebounds.

Down by two and the clock ticking away Carter went the length of the floor did a cross over dribble to get separation and nailed a three from the top of the key to give the Aggies the one point lead with 2.8 seconds remaining. Jasmine Lumpkin stole the inbound pass on the final play and sealed the win.

The Aggies earned a trip to Spokane

Washington to take on the first seed and eventual National Champion Notre Dame in the Sweet 16. The women played great and led the Irish 37-24 in the first half. But Notre Dame fought back and defeated the Aggies 90-84.

Howard had a career-high 26 points in the game along with 14 rebounds. Carter led all players with 31. It was a valiant effort against the team that would go on to win it all.

Texas A&M can be proud of our men's and women's teams that battled through their seasons and made it to the second weekend of the Big Dance. Both teams gave the 12th Man some exciting memories with big time wins in the tourney.





# Rivalry RENEWED

BY ROB HAVENS '88

Joining the SEC was without a doubt the best decision Texas A&M could have ever made. But with each passing year, I always wonder if the new class of Aggies will understand the rivalry we have with that school in Austin. Fortunately, with every sporting event we get to "Saw 'em Off" with our fellow Ags and sing the Aggie War Hymn to remind everyone who our main rival still is.

Opinions vary on when we should renew that rivalry on the gridiron but thanks to Aggie baseball, for the last three years we've got to witness the two schools play between the stripes on the baseball field.

The last two years the schools battled in epic games with the home team winning by a one run advantage. This year, the 12th Man filled the stands with a historic 7,537 fans, a new Blue Bell Park record. There were long lines of fans waiting at the gates to find the limited spots available in the general admission section. Students rushed up the stairs reminiscent of the Oklahoma Land Rush. A sea of maroon with a small contingent of burnt orange filled the park and the atmosphere was electric.

Olsen Field is always the best atmosphere in college baseball but on this night it was even more special. There's nothing like "Sawing 'em Off" with the Horns in the building!

The team did not disappoint as a freshman lefty, Chandler Jozwiak took the mound in front of a capacity crowd. After

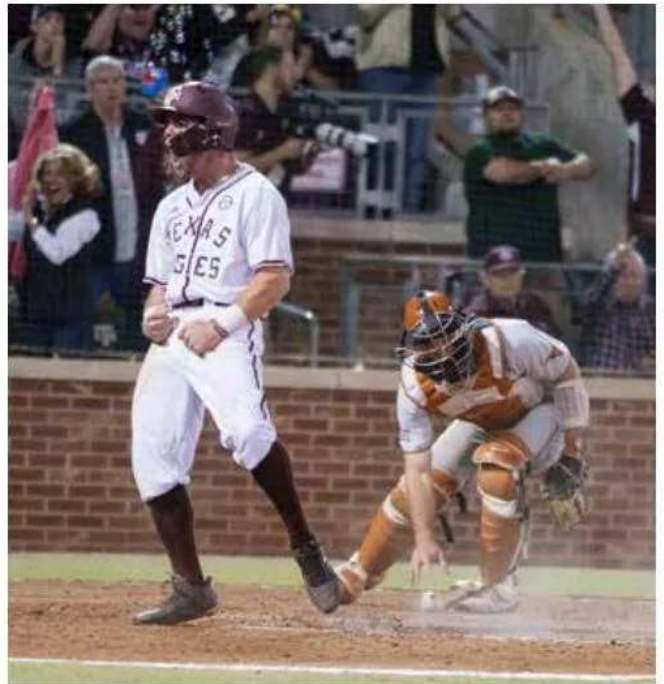
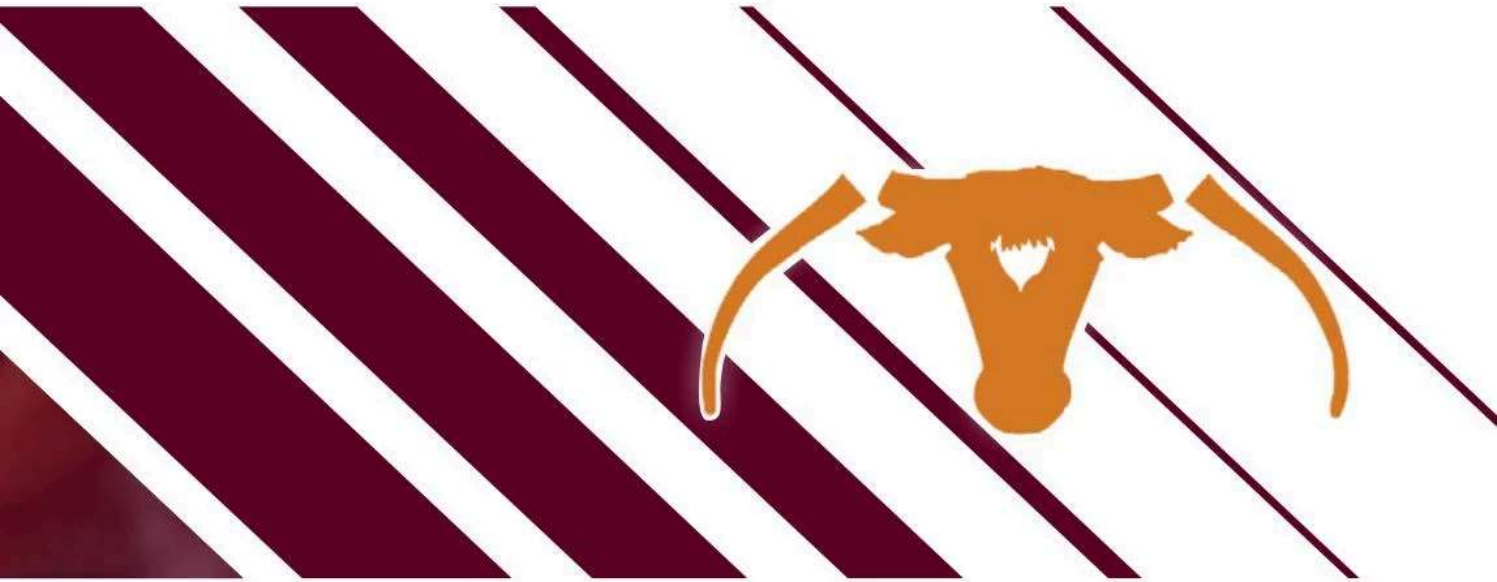
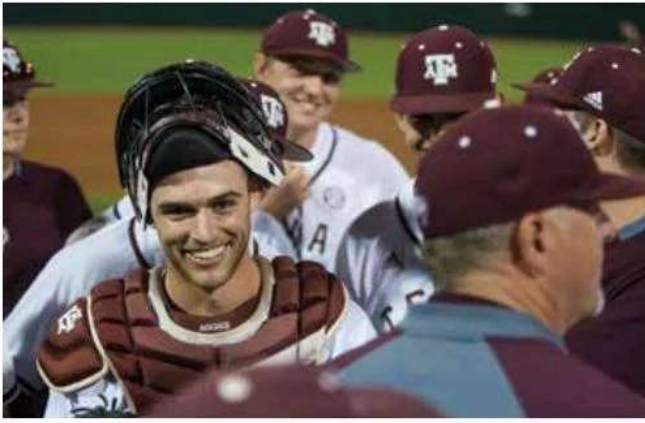
battling through some nerves, Jozwiak came out unscathed from a two-man-on situation in the top of the first to give the Ags momentum. The offense responded by putting a four spot on the sips in the bottom of the inning and batting through the lineup.

The 12th Man chanted the longhorn pitcher's names, screamed Ball 5 chants and willed the Aggies to a victory. Texas fought back and both teams emptied their bull pens using a total of 13 different pitchers. Hunter Coleman had a nine-pitch at bat that ultimately resulted in a 2 RBI single that gave the Aggies a 6-3 lead.

Nolan Hoffman came into the game in the eighth and was able to strand the tying and go ahead runs on the bases and then slam the door in the ninth to give the Aggies the win. It was a total team effort on the mound, at the plate and in the field.

The atmosphere was amazing and as the 12th Man joined together to sing the War Hymn in the 9th it showed that the burning desire to Beat the Hell Outta tu is still very much alive in Aggieland. As the final out was made the crowd began the SEC chant, which echoed in the night's sky. The Horns tried to sing their school song but the words were drowned out by our students banging on the bleachers. There is no doubt that the rivalry is still strong more than 100 years later. If and when we see them on the football field again, it will be something else!







# STERNBERGER

# '18 RECRUITING CLASS



## STACKING IT UP

How the Ags' 2018 recruiting class ranks in the SEC

1.



2.



3.



6.



7.



4.



5.



8.



9.



10.





## GLENN BEAL



<b>POSITION</b> TIGHT END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'5"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 265
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> JOHN CURTIS	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> NEW ORLEANS, LA	
Beal was named first-team All-Louisiana team by USA TODAY High School Sports in 2017. Made 14 catches for 259 yards with two touchdowns in 2017.	

## JAMES FOSTER



<b>POSITION</b> QUARTERBACK	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'3"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 210
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> LANIER	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MONTGOMERY, AL	
Completed 200-of-300 passes for 2,912 yards and 31 touchdowns in 2017 to earn honorable mention all-state recognition by the Alabama Sports Writers Association.	

## JEREMIAH MARTIN



<b>POSITION</b> DEFENSIVE END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'5"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 240
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> CAJON	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> SAN BERNARDINO, CA	
Martin earned second-team All-California honors from the USA TODAY High School Sports in 2017. Earned Division 4 All-CIF honors in 2017.	

## BOBBY "TRE" BROWN



<b>POSITION</b> DEFENSIVE END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'4"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 282
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> ARLINGTON LAMAR	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> ARLINGTON, TX	
Brown earned honorable mention District 4-6A recognition after posting 40 tackles with six tackles for loss and three sacks in 2017. As a junior, Brown earned first-team District 4-6A honors.	

## MARCUS "TANK" JENKINS



<b>POSITION</b> OFFENSIVE LINE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'3"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 325
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> PARK CROSSING	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MONTGOMERY, AL	
Jenkins earned first-team Class 6A all-state selection by the Alabama Sports Writers Association in 2017.	

## LEON O'NEAL JR.



<b>POSITION</b> SAFETY	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'1"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 190
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> CYPRESS SPRINGS	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> CYPRESS, TX	
As a senior, O'Neal posted 78 tackles with five forced fumbles, four passes broken up and four tackles for loss in 2017. U.S. Army All-American and The Opening Finals participant.	

## JASHAUN CORBIN



<b>POSITION</b> RUNNING BACK	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'0"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 191
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> ROCKLEDGE	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> ROCKLEDGE, FL	
As a senior, Corbin recorded 2,252 all-purpose yards and 23 touchdowns. Gained 1,022 yards on 107 carries with 11 TDs as a junior in 2016.	

## BRIAN JOHNSON



<b>POSITION</b> ATHLETE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'2"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 185
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> MANVEL	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MANVEL, TX	
As a senior, Johnson made 58 tackles (51 solos), with two sacks, one interception for a touchdown and two sacks for a 14-1 team.	

## JALEN PRESTON



<b>POSITION</b> WIDE RECEIVER	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'2"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 212
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> MANVEL	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MANVEL, TX	
Preston grabbed 47 catches for 1,096 yards and 13 touchdowns for a 14-1 team in 2017. Under Armour All-American and The Opening Finals participant.	



DENERIC  
**PRINCE**



<b>POSITION</b> RUNNING BACK	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'1"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 196
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> MANVEL	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MANVEL, TX	
Prince earned second-team all-district honors after rushing for 863 yards and 10 touchdowns on 105 attempts for a 14-1 team as a senior in 2017.	

COLTEN  
**BLANTON**



<b>POSITION</b> OFFENSIVE LINE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'7"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 285
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> CYPRESS RANCH	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> CYPRESS, TX	
Blanton earned Texas APSE Class 6A honorable mention all-state recognition after posting 85 knockdowns and 57 pancake blocks for 8-3 team in 2017.	

MOHAMED  
**DIALLO**



<b>POSITION</b> DEFENSIVE TACKLE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'4"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 320
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> ARIZONA WESTERN	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> TORONTO, ONT., CA.	
Diallo posted 19 tackles, including two sacks and 2.5 tackles for loss as a sophomore. Finished his junior college career with 30 tackles, 5 tackles for loss, 2 sacks, and a forced fumble.	

# DIALLO



CHARLES  
**STRONG JR.**



<b>POSITION</b> RUNNING BACK	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'1"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 220
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> UNION COUNTY	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> LAKE BUTLER, FL	
Strong rushed for nearly 4,000 career yards and scored 48 touchdowns in four seasons at Union County HS. Rushed for 1,388 yards and 15 touchdowns on 186 carries as a senior.	

CALEB  
**CHAPMAN**



<b>POSITION</b> WIDE RECEIVER	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'5"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 210
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> CLEAR BROOK	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> FRIENDSWOOD, TX	
Chapman was named to the Texas APSE Class 6A honorable mention all-state team after making 43 catches for 626 yards and 17 touchdowns for a 5-4 team in 2017.	

LUKE  
**MATTHEWS**



<b>POSITION</b> OFFENSIVE LINE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'4"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 305
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> ELKINS	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MISSOURI CITY, TX	
Matthews averaged 3 pancake blocks per game and graded at 92 percent in 2017. Named to the Texas APSE Class 6A honorable mention all-state team. U.S. Army All-American.	



TYREE  
**WILSON**



<b>POSITION</b> DEFENSIVE END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'6"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 230
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> WEST RUSK	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> NEW LONDON, TX	
Wilson contributed 249 career tackles with 60 tackles for loss in three high school seasons at West Rusk HS.	

MONTEL  
**PARKER**

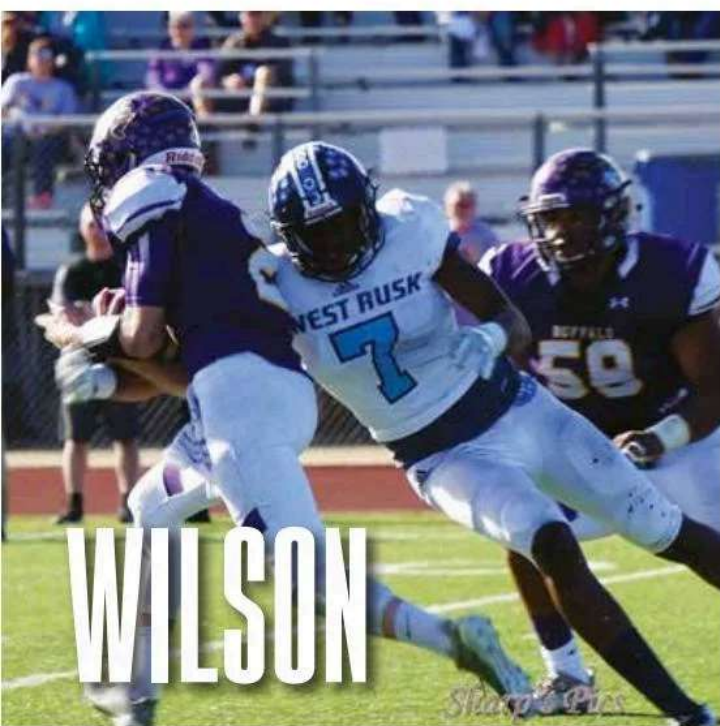


<b>POSITION</b> WIDE RECEIVER	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'2"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 185
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> DICKINSON	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> DICKINSON, TX	
A versatile player, Parker completed his prep career with 2,400 all-purpose yards and 24 touchdowns. As a senior, Parker posted 25 catches and 354 yards and three touchdowns.	

SETH  
**SMALL**



<b>POSITION</b> KICKER	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 5'11"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 190
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> KATY	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> KATY, TX	
For his prep career, Small was successful on 30-of-43 field goals and 161-of-164 extra points with a long field goal of 50 yards. Under Armour All-American.	



BARTON  
**CLEMENT**



<b>POSITION</b> OFFENSIVE LINE	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'3"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 315
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> MARSHALL	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> MISSOURI CITY, TX	
Clement earned first-team All-Greater Houston honors from the Houston Chronicle in 2016 and 2017. Named to the Dave Campbell's Magazine Postseason Tops in Texas First Team.	

JACE  
**STERNBERGER**



<b>POSITION</b> TIGHT END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'4"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 240
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> KINGFISHER	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> KINGFISHER, OK	
Sternberger grabbed 42 passes for 390 yards, 8 TDs at tight end and garnered 53 tackles, 23 tackles-for-loss, 21 sacks, 3 forced fumbles and 6 pass breakups at defensive end.	

MAX  
**WRIGHT**



<b>POSITION</b> DEFENSIVE END	
<b>HEIGHT</b> 6'4"	<b>WEIGHT</b> 270
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> KATY TAYLOR	
<b>HOMETOWN</b> KATY, TX	
As a junior, Wright was a second-team AP Class 6A all-state selection after making 70 tackles, including 9 sacks and 18 tackles for loss. First-team District 19-6A selection.	



JORDAN  
**MOORE**



**POSITION** CORNERBACK

**HEIGHT** 5'11" **WEIGHT** 192

**HIGH SCHOOL** YOAKUM

**HOMETOWN** YOAKUM, TX

Moore contributed 117 tackles, 11 passes broken up, 7 interceptions in 2017. On offense, he rushed for 1,411 yards and 16 touchdowns and had 29 catches for 735 yards and 11 scores.

VERNON  
**JACKSON**



**POSITION** RUNNING BACK

**HEIGHT** 6'3" **WEIGHT** 240

**HIGH SCHOOL** BOLING

**HOMETOWN** BOLING, TX

Jackson was named the District 14-3A Offensive MVP after rushing for 2,560 yards and 33 touchdowns as a senior in 2017.





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# NEW ERA IN AGGIELAND BEGINS

BY ROB HAVENS '88

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Since the announcement was made that Jimbo Fisher would be our new head coach, the excitement has been building. I personally couldn't wait to cover the first spring practice and see what changes would be made.

To understand the changes, it's important to look back at how Sumlin ran his practices. The Aggies use to take the practice field as rap music blared over the speaker system. Sumlin use to say that football didn't take place in a sterile environment with no sound and by playing the music he could acclimate his players to the noisy environment of a game. It was not uncommon to see players bouncing around singing the words to the songs as they waited for the next drill.

When the Aggies came out of the indoor facility on that first day this spring, the players sprinted to their assigned places on the field and it was a totally different feel. There was no music blaring and the sounds that you heard were the coaches yelling out instructions and imploring the players to go fast!

Jimbo would later explain, "If you play music, how can they hear me? Are they listening to me or the music?" If I were to describe it, I would say Jimbo's practices are like Sumlin's practices on steroids!

As the players went through their drills, I quickly discovered there are no favorites. I don't care who you are, if you mess up, you're going to hear about it. Make a bad snap, a bad pass, don't receive the handoff correctly, run the wrong pattern, they would let them know.

After the coaches told the players they messed up, they would teach them how to do it the right way. There was no "let it slide" and "do it right the next time", they made them do it again. As Coach Fisher said, "We are not going to practice it until we get it right, we are going to practice it until we can't get it wrong!"

The goal is greatness and the emphasis is on making every play the way you would do it in order to win a championship. The phrase "That's not going to win a championship" was echoed more than once.

The intensity was night and day from what I saw covering practices before. The attitude has gone from "If we do this or that we could win a championship" to "We will do this or that and we will win a championship!"

The players are being held accountable for everything they do. From the outside looking in it reminds me of being a parent. A good parent instructs and disciplines and holds their kids accountable. It's not your job to be their friend, it's your job to parent them. It looks like to me Coach Fisher is interested in teaching, correcting and coaching these players up.

A few years ago the Aggies were playing in Tuscaloosa and Bama was running all over us. Late in the game, they were up big and a substitute offensive lineman for the Tide got a motion penalty and Coach Saban yanked him from the game and met him coming off the field yelling at him for messing up. I said to a fellow media guy, that's why he wins championships, because he insists on greatness and will not settle for less and he holds his players accountable.

In my opinion, that's exactly what the Aggies have in Coach Fisher. He has also surrounded himself with coaches that have the same mindset. He expects the best from everyone, from the starting QB to the managers that set up the practice field.

Over the spring I have seen marked improvement across the board. It takes a while to install your system and the players are having to learn a whole new language when it comes to play calling. According to Nick Starkel, a play that use to be called with two words is now a paragraph then a check and another



paragraph.

Kellen Mond talked about Coach Fisher's presence in the position film room and how much he is learning. He use to look at a couple of things before making a pass. Now he says he's learning the intricacies of the new offense.

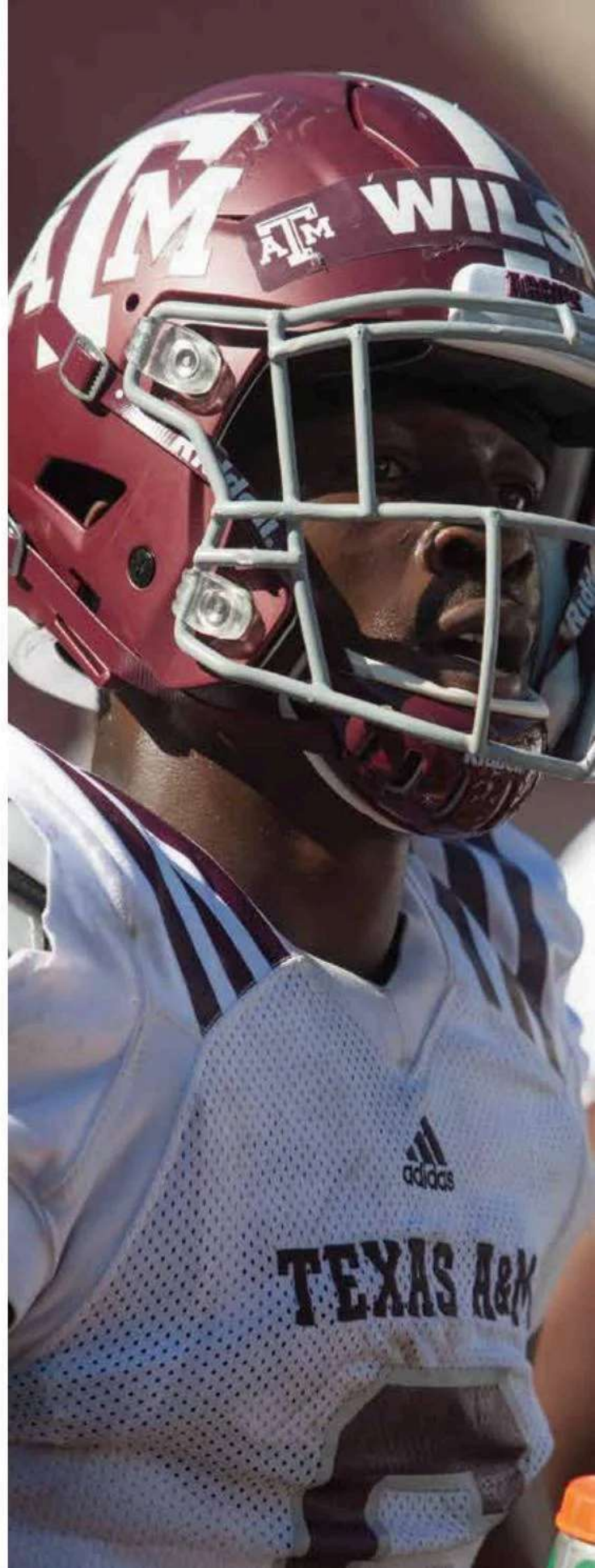
It's not enough to throw a complete pass. Fisher is teaching them their steps, where their arms suppose to be, where they are suppose to step. It's quite fascinating to hear him coach up these players.

Trayveon Williams was singled out as having a great spring. Fisher commented on his ability to block and "hit someone in the mouth" as they get in the backfield. He likes his ability to run inside and outside and get more involved in the pass game. Starkel and Mond are still competing for the starting job and he has seen good things from both players. They will continue to work over the summer and a decision for a starter won't come until fall camp.

Jhamon Ausbon and Kendrick Rogers were applauded for their progression in the new system and making some nice plays in scrimmages. He also mentioned Tyrel Dodson, Kingsley Keke and Daylon Mack as having done some good things this spring. Fisher also mentioned the progression of tight end Jace Sternberger who made some big catches in the scrimmage. A position that was little used in the past except for blocking sounds like it could be a key weapon this fall.

The Aggies have worked on a lot of situational things in practices throughout the spring and Fisher has been happy with the effort as they are learning the system.

Coach Fisher has brought a winning attitude with him and if the players buy in, he will get the job done. Rome wasn't built in a day, but Coach Fisher is ready, willing and able to build this program into a championship caliber organization.













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## Women's Lacrosse Club

BY ROB HAVENS '88

It's always interesting to find out how the different Sport Clubs at Texas A&M got started. Holly Oliva played on the men's lacrosse team for a year back in 1992 and, while playing, discovered there was substantial interest in creating a women's team. So, in 1993 she got one started, and that was the beginning of the same program that competes today.

The current squad has twenty-two members that play in the Texas Women's Lacrosse League (TWLL). The Aggies get to battle against Baylor, Texas, Texas State, TCU, SMU, UH, Tulane, and LSU.

I asked club president Tobey Folk what makes a great lacrosse player, and she replied, "Great lacrosse players are confident, hardworking, competitive, coachable, team players, communicative, and are mentally tough. They are coordinated, agile, speedy, have great endurance, and good field senses don't hurt either!"

The Ags continue to build the program today, and they welcome students that have never played the game before. Folk said that most club members played in high school and want to continue to compete in the sport they love.

When we asked Tobey about her favorite memory from being on the team, she told us, "It was at the TWLL Championships in 2017. TWLL is our conference, so this was the championship game of our conference tournament. The winner of the game would get an automatic qualification for the Women's

Collegiate Lacrosse Association (WCLA) Nationals. We were playing t.u. and were definitely the underdogs going into it. We held our own the entire game but, towards the end, went down by five points. Despite having only a few minutes left and being down a good amount, we

pushed back with everything we had and came back to beat them for the first time in nine years! Winning that game is something I will definitely never forget."

Although juggling school, work, and competing on the team can be difficult, Folk told AI that it has been the best experience she could have hoped for. "I have made my best friends in college by being on the lacrosse team, and being able to spend so much time with them while also playing lacrosse has made my experience here the best it could have been."



## Triathlon Club

BY ROB HAVENS '88

The first time I ever saw a triathlon I was watching ABC's Wide World of Sports in 1982. Julie Moss was competing in the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon, and just hundreds of yards from the finish, her body gave out. She mustered the strength to finish the race and crawled across the finish line. I remember being in awe of her determination and impressed with her ability to run that race.

Triathletes are arguably the best athletes in sports. They push their bodies to their limits while competing in a swim, a bicycle race, and then a long run, sometimes in the toughest of environments.

Aggie Triathlon Club president Ryan Morse says, "Unlike other sports that require naturally talented athletes, triathlon is all about dedication and consistency. We have some very talented athletes that join our team, but the ones who do the best are those that are willing to consistently put in the work day in and day out."

The club started in 2003 with

just a little more than ten members and has grown to a membership of about 120 student-athletes. Some of the members competed with their high school triathlon teams while others participated in swimming or running sports, and they join to be able to continue competing in triathlons at the collegiate level.

The club has experienced great success over the years, finishing in the top five in nationals pretty consistently. Their main opponent in the conference is the University of Texas. The team won the conference championship after defeating Texas and will travel to Tuscaloosa, Alabama for the national championships.

We asked Ryan about his favorite memory of being on the team. "Last year when we placed fourth overall at nationals, despite a series of injuries incurred by many of our athletes at a race three weeks earlier when some severe and unexpected inclement weather during the bike segment led to almost all of our top athletes crashing. Even while still recovering from those injuries, our team managed to pull together and have an excellent showing at nationals."

Ryan loves introducing new

people to the sport. He informed us that some club members go on to become professional triathletes. But even if they don't choose that road, Ryan says, "It is still amazingly rewarding to introduce students to a new sport and give them the skills and knowledge to stay fit and active throughout their lives after college."



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